

Message Text

PAGE 01 SAIGON 13694 301148Z

51

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EUR-10 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00

L-02 PRS-01 IO-03 DPW-01 PA-01 USIE-00 AID-10 RSR-01

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O R 301015Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5288

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

USDELCSISICW

DADDQISAX

GUXNPNFKETDUO #

CUFWDTVFMJBT/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 2208

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS UNN

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI

USDAO SAIGON

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 13694 301148Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13694

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJECT: VIET-NAM CEASE-FIRE WEEKLY ASSESSMENT, JULY 23 - 29, 1973

SUMMARY: MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTHERN THREE REGIONS OF THE RVN HAS GRADULLY INCREASED TO ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL AS PREVAILED PRIOR TO THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE. THIS STEADY INCREASE IN COMBAT CAN LARGELY BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE CONTINUING EFFORTS BY BOTH THE RVNAF AND THE VC/NVA TO CLEAR THE AREAS THEY CLAIM TO CONTROL OF THE PRESENCE OF ENEMY FORCES. THE ICCS HAS CEASED ACTIVITY NOW THAT THE CANDEL HAS WITHDRAWN COMPLETELY. THE ONLY FUNCTION THAT THE ICCS MIGHT CONTINUE WILL BE OBSERVING AT THE SITE OF PRISONER RETURNS; BOTH THE PRG AND THE RVN ANNOUNCED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW A THREE DELEGATION ICCS TO PERFORM THIS DUTY, "IF THE OTHER SIDE ALSO AGREES." THE RVN AND THE PRG RESUMED THE RETURN OF PRISONERS ON JULY 23, FOLLOWING A TPJMC SCHEDULE WHICH CALLED FOR THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS TO BE COMPLETED BY JULY 2, WITHIN THE 45 DAYS SPECIFIED BY THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE. ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE EXCHANGES, HOWEVER, A COMMUNIST DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE GVN DEL FOR ALLOWING SOME OF THE PRISONERS TO RALLY TO THE GVN RESULTED IN THE SUSPENSION OF FURTHER RETURNS BY THE GVN DEL UNTIL THEY RECEIVE ASSURANCES THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE DEMONSTRATIONS. THE FPJMT REACHED AGREEMENT ON THE WORDING OF ONE MINOR POINT (THE CARE OF GRAVES), BUT MEANINGFUL PROGRESS ON MAIN ISSUES APPEARS UNLIKELY. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MR 1, THE LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY HAS SLOWLY INCREASED OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS TO A POINT NEARLY AS HIGH AS BEFORE THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON JUNE 13. THE NORTHERN PART OF MR 1, ABOVE THE HAI VAN PASS, IS THE ONLY TRULY QUIET SPOT IN THE COUNTRY, PERHAPS BECAUSE THE FRONT LINE IS DEFINED BETTER IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY. SOUTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, IN MR 1, THE RVNAF CONTINUE OPERATIONS TO CLEAR VC/NVA "LEOPARD SPOTS" IN THE COASTAL LOWLANDS. VC/NVA RESISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN NOTABLY STRONG. IN MR 2, GOVERNMENT FORCES CONTINUE ATTEMPTS
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PAGE 03 SAIGON 13694 301148Z

TO RE-TAKE THE AREA WEST OF KONTUM CITY WITH LITTLE SUCCESS AND TO CLEAR AREAS NEAR ROUTE 1 IN BINH DINH WITH MORE SUCCESS. THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING IN MR 3 IS NOW NEAR THE HIGHEST LEVELS SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE IN JANUARY. MOST OF THIS IS CENTERED ON THE RVNAF EFFORT TO RE-OPEN ROUTE 1A, PART OF THE MAIN LOC BETWEEN THE PHUOC LONG PROVINCE CAPITAL AND THE REST OF THE REGION. IT NOW SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT THE MOVEMENT OF THE NVA 7TH DIVISION INTO THE AREA AND THE CLOSING OF ROUTE 1A JUST AFTER CEASE-FIRE II BEGAN, WAS INTENDED TO MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO RE-SUPPLY THE PHUOC BINH/SONG BE AREA, ENHANCING THE POSSIBILITY OF THE COMMUNISTS SEIZING THIS REMAINING GVN ENCLAVE FAR INSIDE TERRITORY THAT THEY CLAIM IN MR 3. MR 4 SAW ONLY A SLIGHT DECREASE IN COMBAT ACTIVITY. MOST OF THE ACTIVITY DURING THE WEEK RESULTED FROM RVNAF ATTEMPTS TO CLEAR THE

SEVEN MOUNTAINS AREA IN CHAU DOC.

2. THE CANDEL HAS NOW DEPARTED COUNTRY COMPLETELY AND THE ICCS IS SETTLED INTO A DEEP SOMNOLENCE. THE REMAINING THREE DELEGATIONS APPARENTLY DO NOT FOR THE PRESENT INTEND TO WITHDRAW THEIR MEMBERS FROM ANY OF THE REGIONAL OR SUB-REGIONAL SITES (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TRI TON, CHAU DOC, FROM WHICH THEY WITHDREW DURING THE WEEK WHEN THEIR COMPOUND WAS MORTARED DURING A VC/NVA ABF WHICH WAS PROBABLY AIMED AT THE DISTRICT COMPOUND ACROSS THE STREET). THE TEAMS, HOWEVER, ARE GENERALLY INACTIVE AND WILL PROBABLY REMAIN SO UNTIL A SUCCESSOR IS NAMED FOR THE DEPARTED CANDEL. BOTH THE PRG DEL AND THE RVN DEL TO THE TPJMC ANNOUNCED, IN SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCES ON JULY 28, THAT THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF ONLY THREE PARTIES AS OBSERVERS AT ANY REMAINING EXCHANGES OF PRISONERS, "IF THE OTHER SIDE WOULD ALSO AGREE." THE RVN DEL SPOKESMAN, HOWEVER, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THAT WHILE THE PRESENCE OF A REDUCED ICCS COULD BE PERMITTED DURING THE RETURN OF PRISONERS, "FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS," THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE GVN WOULD AGREE TO THE ICCS PERFORMING ALL ITS OTHER DUTIES WITH ONLY THREE DELEGATIONS PRESENT.

3. THE TPJMC BEGAN A PROGRAM OF PRISONER EXCHANGES ON JULY 23. THE ORIGINAL SCHEDULE CALLED FOR ALL PRISONERS ON BOTH SIDES TO BE RETURNED BY JULY 28. ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, HOWEVER, PROBLEMS AROSE. AFTER THE GVN HAD RETURNED 600 PRISONERS ON JULY 24 AND 225 ON JULY 24, THE COMMUNISTS AT THE LOC NINH SITE ORGANIZED A DEMONSTRATION BY SOME 300 PERSONS, PROTESTING THE GVN DEL'S WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW THOSE PRISONERS WHO WISHED TO RALLY TO RE-
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PAGE 04 SAIGON 13694 301148Z

TURN TO SAIGON. THE GVN SUSPENDED FURTHER PRISONER RETURNS UNTIL ASSURANCES AGAINST A RENEWAL OF SUCH ACTIVITY COULD BE WORKED OUT WITH THE PRG DEL TO THE TPJMC. THE PRG THEREUPON SUSPENDED ITS PROGRAM TO RETURN PRISONERS AFTER RELEASING 26 CIVILIANS TO THE GVN AT THIEN NGON, TAY NINH, ON JULY 24. FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE TPJMC DURING THE WEEK MADE NO PROGRESS. BOTH DELEGATIONS HELD PRESS CONFERENCES JULY 28, THE PRG IN THE MORNING AND THE RVN IN THE AFTERNOON. BOTH SIDES REVIEWED THE 45 DAYS SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE, EACH BLAMING THE OTHER FOR THE LACK OF ANY PROGRESS IN ACCOMPLISHING THE POINTS SPECIFIED IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE.

4. THE FPJMT CONTINUES TO BE HAMSTRUNG BY COMMUNIST FOOTDRAGGING. DESPITE AGREEMENT DURING THE WEEK ON THE LANGUAGE OF ONE POINT (CARE OF GRAVES), AGREEMENT ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR IMPLEMENTING ARTICLE 8B OF THE AGREEMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE IS NOT LIKELY. THE DRV DEL AND THE PRG DEL ARE MAKING CONTENTIOUS DEMANDS REGARDING THE BUILDING OF MEMORIALS AND CEMETERIES, AND VISITS OF RELATIVES TO GRAVES. THE USDEL AND RVN DEL HOLD THAT THESE TWO SUBJECTS ARE NOT WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF ARTICLE 8B.
MARTIN

NOTE BY OC/T: SAIGON 13694; #AS RECEIVED. CORRECTION
TO FOLLOW.

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CAN THO
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USDELCSICW

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GUXNPNFKETDUO #
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LONDON
MANILA
MOSCOW
NHA TRANG
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PHNOM PENH
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